

23 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]  
Chief, Far East Division

SUBJECT : [REDACTED]

The attached note was written at my request by [REDACTED]. I think it merits careful consideration. As we have discussed in previous conversations, two things about the [REDACTED] case bother me very much.

a. I do not wish in any way to seem critical about the past work done on this case, particularly by [REDACTED] -- whose dedication, effort and results are all praiseworthy. Nonetheless, the fact remains -- as [REDACTED] himself would be among the first to contend -- that [REDACTED] is holding back on a wealth of information on topics of major interest and significance to the U.S. Government. As we all know, he is a very cool, tough, disciplined Party professional. Hence he has been very reluctant to provide much information, particularly information that (in his opinion) might compromise his former Party associates and/or their activities. To date, [REDACTED] is clearly the net winner; on points, in his almost two-year battle of wits with his GVN and/or U.S. interrogators.

b. In the [REDACTED] channel, the other side has offered to swap [REDACTED] plus other unspecified prisoners for [REDACTED] and one of his colleagues. Quite properly, we have resisted this exchange in light of [REDACTED] known importance. If, however, the Agency should ever be taxed with accounting

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for the use made of [ ] in terms of additional information obtained, during the additional time he has remained in allied custody, we would find it difficult at this juncture to make a very impressive case.

2. Granting the difficulties involved in cracking this tough a nut without resorting to professionally and morally unacceptable methods, I still think part of the problem lies in our past focus and approach. To be blunt, the record of this case strongly suggests to me that we have been too parochially narrow in our concerns. We have concentrated, understandably, on topics of major CI/CE interest to a professional intelligence service (e.g., the wiring diagram of the [ ] - precisely the topics on which [ ] equally understandably, is most reluctant to talk. In the process, however, we have paid disproportionately little attention to what might be termed strategic intelligence background topics that bear only indirectly on our professional interests but are of considerable importance to our policy-level masters. Never before have we had this kind of a potential window into the upper levels of the Lao Dong Party -- one who certainly knows a great deal about the personal relationships between and among the members of the Politburo, how the decision to resume armed struggle was made in the late 1950s, who advocated this policy, who opposed it and on what grounds, what really lies behind the Hoang Minh Chinh affair, etc., etc. These are questions of much more than historical interest, since their answers could give the U.S. Government a much clearer fix than it now has on how policy is actually made in Hanoi, whose voices count, and what latent splits or factional polarization may exist within the Lao Dong's top echelons.

3. One theme is recurrent in [ ] account of his dealings with [ ] namely the latter's intellectual arrogance and love of lecturing his interrogator. It seems to me that the right kind of interrogator who could ask the right kind of leading questions -- i.e., one sufficiently well versed in Party history and the North Vietnamese leadership structure to recognize significant new data the moment he heard it -- might be able to tap [ ] fund of strategic intelligence. I regard finding this type of interrogator and assigning him promptly to this case as matters of considerable importance and urgency. I, therefore, believe [ ] suggestion warrants very serious consideration.

George A. Carver, Jr.

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